VOLUNTEERING AS A COMPANION FOR FOREIGN STUDENT EXCHANGE IN MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF PAREPARE

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Abstrak
Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan Pendamping Pertukaran Pelajar Asing di Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare. Pembelajaran kolaboratif dalam pertukaran budaya: Menjelajahi tren dan fiturnya saat ini. Metode penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif yaitu mengambil referensi dari buku atau dari artikel yang karya-karya tersebut bagi mahasiswa asing banyak menghadapi tantangan dalam menyesuaikan diri dengan kehidupan di negara barunya. Untuk membantu mahasiswa asing dalam mengatasi tantangan tersebut, menjadi relawan sebagai pendamping dengan menerapkan metode STAR (Situation, Challenge, Action, Reflection). Kesukarelawanan sebagai co-host pada siswa pertukaran asing dari Universitas Filipina menggunakan metode STAR memberikan kerangka kerja yang efektif untuk memberikan dukungan, mengatasi tantangan, dan mendorong refleksi. Dengan memahami situasi, mengidentifikasi tantangan, mengambil tindakan yang tepat, dan mendorong refleksi, pendamping relawan memberikan pendekatan holistik dan terarah untuk membantu siswa asing berhasil selama pertukaran mereka.
Kata kunci: Kesukarelawanan; metode STAR; Pertukaran pelajar

Abstract
The aim of this research is to describe a Companion for Foreign Student Exchange in Muhammadiyah University of Parepare. Collaborative learning in cultural exchange: Exploring its current trend and feature. This research method is qualitative, namely taking references from books or from articles that these works for many foreign students face challenges in adjusting to life in their new country. To assist foreign students in overcoming these challenges, volunteering as a companion by applying the STAR (Situation, Challenge, Action, Reflection) method. Volunteering as a co-host on foreign exchange students from Philippines University using the STAR method provides an effective framework for providing support, overcoming challenges, and encouraging reflection. By understanding the situation, identifying challenges, taking appropriate action, and encouraging reflection, volunteer companions provide a holistic and purposeful approach to helping foreign students succeed during their exchange.
Keywords: keywords consist of 3-5 words, separated by a semicolon (;))

Introduction

In light of globalization in the twenty-first century, businesses are seeking employees with skills that would make them more competitive in the international arena. Hence, the graduates of universities need to have the ability to interact with people from other cultures and different backgrounds to be successful in the international labor market. They are required to work in multicultural teams and speak other languages. In light of globalization in the twenty-first century, businesses are seeking employees with

skills that would make them more competitive in the international arena. Hence, the graduates of universities need to have the ability to interact with people from other cultures and different backgrounds to be successful in the international labor market. They are required to work in multicultural teams and speak other languages. (Atalar, 2019).

Being educational institutions with a public responsibility, universities need to consider their social relevance in contemporary complex societies, since the end of the twentieth century, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are more and more requested to abandon their former ivory tower status and to establish relevant interactions with society. By stimulating and guiding the utilization of knowledge for the practical concerns of everyday life, they should take a visible role in facing some of the main challenges of our time: for example social inequality, environmental issues, immigration and global citizenship. In the context of globalisation, particularly, universities must be engaged with their region and contribute to the well-being of the local society. Cultural diversity in societies has become a reality that still calls for appropriate translation into education systems and curricula. The principle of internationalisation, defined as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension" into educational practice, is increasingly becoming a fundamental challenge for schools and universities. Community engagement and student volunteering during on exchange, by bringing international students into primary and secondary classrooms, contributes to the international orientation of educational institutions (Responsibility & Education, n.d.)

Generally, international students experience acculturation in academic contexts such as attending courses, visiting office hours, or interacting with other classmates and instructors in a classroom environment. Though just as vital, opportunities for social integration and acculturation outside of the classroom are limited, which means that international students may not develop intercultural communication skills even if they are exposed to English on a regular basis. International students can achieve social integration while they experience diverse intercultural learning. According to King et al. (2013), there are three key requirements for intercultural learning: 1) students must encounter the experience of others, 2) they must feel safe enough to explore cultural difference, and 3) they must engage in various approaches (e.g., listening and observing comparing, and reflecting). The opportunity to experience stress free intercultural learning may be an important basis for more challenging future experiences. (O'Neil et al., 2022) If universities are to develop global citizens, they must act as international communities that provide opportunities for purposeful, yet authentic interactions. To this end, classroom learning may be augmented by volunteer work, which offers an informal, yet structured setting, where interactions may be somewhat openended but also present less pressure than more variable social settings. In sum, although volunteerism may present an ethos new to some international students, the context is an ideal avenue for communication, language practice, and non-academic integration.

Based on (Wang, 2013) Collaborative Learning in Cultural Exchange: Exploring Its Current Trend and Feature the study showed that cultural exchanges can play the roles as catalyst of language learning, mediator of different linguistic and cultural groups, developer of learning communities, provider of authentic information, peace maker, and creator of multiple learning. On the other hand, the author envisioned and predicted the future of cross-cultural exchanges as an environment of multiple learning, a learning community with various modes of communication, participants with multiple language proficiency, and collaboration between/among students from different cultures. Hopefully, the research findings can provide language teachers who are conducting cultural exchanges with a way of thinking as to how a cross-cultural activity can be

developed to satisfy students' needs and how a creative cross-cultural activity can be designed to ensure that students can gain the most benefits from it.

Atalar (2019) in his research Student Exchange: The First Step Toward 7 International Collaboration conclude that Universities in both developing and developed nations use student exchange as the first mechanism to increase collaboration between universities. It is also used to attract full-time international undergraduate students for increased tuition income and to lure graduate students for a stronger research program. The presence of international exchange students in a university improves the diversity in the classroom and the interaction of students with different cultures, developing the intercultural competencies of the students and helping them become global citizens. In the long run, such a program aids trade between the countries and contributes to good relations, to understanding between nations and eventually to world peace.

Student exchange programs offer a unique opportunity for students to immerse themselves in a different cultural and educational environment. By studying abroad, students can expand their horizons, gain international perspectives, and develop valuable skills. This essay explores the significance of student exchange programs, highlighting the benefits of cultural immersion, academic growth, and the promotion of global understanding.

1. Cultural Immersion: One of the key benefits of student exchange programs is the opportunity for cultural immersion. By living and studying in a foreign country, students are exposed to new customs, traditions, and ways of life. They have the chance to interact with local people, learn the language, and experience the rich cultural heritage of the host country firsthand. This cultural immersion fosters a greater appreciation for diversity, develops intercultural competence, and promotes tolerance and respect.

2. Academic Growth: Student exchange programs offer students a chance to broaden their academic horizons. By attending classes in a different educational system, students gain exposure to new teaching methods, perspectives, and areas of study. They have the opportunity to learn from renowned professors, collaborate with international peers, and engage in research or projects unique to the host institution. This academic growth enhances their knowledge, critical thinking skills, and adaptability, ultimately enriching their educational journey.

3. Language Acquisition: Studying abroad provides an immersive language learning experience. Being surrounded by native speakers, students are motivated to improve their language skills and develop fluency. Communicating in the host country's language enhances cross-cultural communication, enables deeper connections with local communities, and opens doors to future academic and career opportunities. Language acquisition during a student exchange program is not just limited to formal education but also extends to everyday interactions and cultural experiences.

4. Global Understanding and Perspective: Student exchange programs contribute to the development of global understanding and perspective. By living and studying in a different country, students gain firsthand experience of global issues, challenges, and diverse perspectives. This exposure broadens their worldview, encourages critical thinking about global affairs, and promotes empathy and cultural sensitivity. Students return home with a more nuanced understanding of the interconnectedness of our world and a sense of responsibility towards global issues.

5. Personal Growth and Independence: Participating in a student exchange program promotes personal growth and independence. Living in a foreign country away from the familiar environment and support systems pushes students out of their

comfort zones. They develop resilience, self-confidence, adaptability, and problem-solving skills. Navigating day-to-day challenges, managing finances, and building social connections fosters maturity and self-reliance. The experience of studying abroad empowers students to become more independent, open-minded, and culturally aware individuals.

6. Lifelong Connections and Network: Student exchange programs facilitate the formation of lifelong connections and a global network. Students have the opportunity to build friendships and professional relationships with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. These connections can extend beyond the duration of the program and serve as valuable resources for future collaborations, career opportunities, and intercultural exchange.

Based on (McBride et al., 2010) There is growing interest in the potential of international service to foster international understanding between peoples and nations and to promote global citizenship and intercultural cooperation, and international service may be growing in prevalence worldwide. Despite the scale of international service, its impacts are not well understood. Although there is a growing body of descriptive evidence about the various models and intended outcomes of international service, the overwhelming majority of research is based on case and cross-sectional studies, which do not permit conclusions about the impacts of international service. This paper reports on a quasi-experimental study that assesses perceptions of the impact of service on international volunteers, matched to a comparison group that did not volunteer internationally during the same study period. The results of this quasi-experimental study suggest that international volunteer service has a positive impact on international volunteers perceived international awareness, international social capital, and international career intentions. However, compared to the non-participants, results suggest that international service does not have an impact on volunteers perceived intercultural relations. In addition, several variables are found to influence specific outcome.

The decline in volunteering among college students is seen as a major problem because community service has been associated with a number of positive outcomes for students. Specifically, community service has been linked to improvements in student problem solving, cognitive development, moral development, social responsibility, leadership, teamwork, citizenship, time management, communication skills, cultural understanding academic performance, critical thinking career marketability and self confidence. Further validation of the value of community service can be found in the private sector where corporate volunteer programs have experienced rapid growth. Research indicates the main reason why so many corporations are investing time and resources into the development and operation of volunteering programs is not just because of altruism or potential PR benefits, but rather because businesses recognize that these programs help them develop and attract more productive employees.(Garver et al., 2009).

Understanding the motivations for volunteering is important because studies suggest that recruiting programs are more likely to be effective when the opportunities they promote and the appeals they communicate match up with the underlying motivations of potential volunteers. Volunteering has been found to be motivated by the following needs: a need to be useful/productive, a need for affiliation a need to help others, a need for social interaction, a need for status a need to make oneself more marketable, and a strong personal concern for a particular cause.

Research has also found that people are more likely to volunteer for a particular cause when they or their families are directly affected by the cause, when they are

personally invited to volunteer by someone they know, and when they are aware of people they know who are currently volunteering for that particular cause. In addition, found a distinction between people who wanted to work directly with the disadvantaged versus those that wanted to help the cause but who wished to do so in a way that allowed them to avoid social interactions with clients, staff and even in some cases other volunteers. (Garver et al., 2009)

Volunteering is a selfless act of dedicating time, skills, and efforts to support and contribute to a cause or organization without expecting any financial gain. It is a powerful way to make a positive impact on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. Being a volunteer is a powerful and transformative experience that goes beyond selflessness. It offers an opportunity to make a meaningful impact, grow as an individual, build connections, and foster empathy. Volunteering enables individuals to contribute to positive change in society and leaves a lasting legacy. By giving back, volunteers become agents of hope and catalysts for a better world, demonstrating the true power of compassion and humanity.

In this paper, (O'Neil et al., 2022) a case is made that campus internationalization and the social integration of both domestic and international students may be fostered through volunteerism. This argument is supported by data from a survey of a performing arts volunteer organization at a large Midwestern public university. The survey examines the national diversity of the organization, its inclusion practices, and student perceptions of their own cross-national interactions. The results are augmented by participant observation data from an international graduate student volunteer. Discussion includes a consideration of respondent satisfaction with the organization's diversity and inclusion practices, as well as their experience socializing and making friends while volunteering. It is worth identifying successful organizations such as the one described in this paper because the defining factor for success may depend on specific attitudes and practices

Ebrahimi Malekshah et al., (2022) said that Project risk is an uncertain situation or event that, if it occurs, may have a negative or positive effect on one or more project objectives, such as scope, schedule, cost, and quality. Major industrial projects are increasingly facing complexity and uncertainty. The scope of this paper is related to petrochemical projects, in which risks directly affect the approved time, cost, and quality of the project. In such projects, there are risks that neither the owner nor the contractor has the main role in the occurrence or prevention of, and it is not easy to determine who is responsible for them. In such projects, there are risks that neither the owner nor the contractor has the main role in the occurrence or prevention of, and for which it is not easy to determine responsibility. Therefore, predicting, identifying, analyzing, and determining of the optimal allocation of risk responsibility between contracting parties is one of the most important steps before the start of the project. Suppose it is not correctly allocated among project stakeholders, then, in that case, risk responsibility imposes costs on the project that must be paid by the owner, contractor, and partnership, causing, in general, many problems for project management. Therefore, this paper presents a model to calculate the optimal ratio of risk allocation between the project parties in the concluding contract stage, using the UTA-STAR technique to obtain the owner and contractor utility function to create as much of a win-win relationship between them as possible.

Widana et al., (2023) The Independent Curriculum policy has implications to the changes of curriculum structure. All educational activities are directed to achieve Project of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening. The obstacle encountered is that the development of Project of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening module has not been able to be carried out optimally. Likewise, Pancasila Student Profile formative and

summative assessment techniques are not in accordance with regulatory provisions. It is caused by the lack of teacher's understanding in developing Project of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening module and the availability of supporting regulations is very minimal. Meanwhile, the availability of Project of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening module is necessary. The purpose of this community service activity is to improve the ability of SMK Pariwisata Triatma Jaya Tabanan teachers to develop Project of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening modules in accordance with the characteristics of school. The method used in this activity is STAR method (Situation, Challenge, Action, Reflection and impact). After conducting the activity, the results are the increase of teachers' understanding to the concepts and mechanisms for developing Project of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening module, and being able to compile module in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws.

(Responsibility & Education, n.d.) The Social Erasmus programme incorporates all volunteer activities where international students engage with locals to contribute to their local host society. The Social Erasmus+ project is an Erasmus+ KA3 Forward Looking Cooperation grant project to support the development and professionalisation of the Social Erasmus initiative across Europe. The main aims of the project are:

a) Better integrate the international exchange student in the local society by organising volunteer opportunities to ensure an exchange of values takes place between the International students and the local community

b) Developing and professionalise the implementation process of the activities by involving more stakeholders such as Higher Education Institutions and local schools in the process.

c) Increasing the learning experience of students by engaging with Higher Education Institutions and Non-Formal Education experts to build in elements of Community Service Learning in the curricula and increase the recognition students receive for their volunteering activity.

Foreign exchange students are a unique opportunity to learn and exchange cultures in a different academic environment. However, many foreign students face challenges in adjusting to life in their new country. To assist foreign students in overcoming these challenges, volunteering as a companion by applying the STAR (Situation, Challenge, Action, Reflection) method provides an effective framework. In this essay, we will explore the experience of volunteering as a co-host for foreign exchange students Muhammadiyah University of Parepare with the STAR method, and how this approach can provide support, overcome challenges, and encourage reflection for foreign students from Philippines University to achieve success.

Research Method

This research method is qualitative, namely taking references from books or from articles that these works for many foreign students face challenges in adjusting to life in their new country. To assist foreign students in overcoming these challenges, volunteering as a companion by applying the STAR (Situation, Challenge, Action, Reflection) method provides an effective framework this research aims to understand how can the volunteers provide support, overcome challenges, and encourage reflection for foreign students from Philippines University to achieve success.

The STAR Method

The STAR method is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question by discussing the specific **s**ituation, **t**ask, **a**ction, and **r**esult of the situation you are describing.

a) **Situation:** Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

b) **Task:** What goal were you working toward?

c) **Action:** Describe the actions you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail and keep the focus on YOU. What specific steps did you take and what was your particular contribution? Be careful that you don't describe what the team or group did when talking about a project, but what you actually did. Use the word "I," not "we" when describing actions.

d) **Result:** Describe the outcome of your actions and don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Make sure your answer contains multiple positive results.

Make sure that you follow all parts of the STAR method. Be as specific as possible at all times, without rambling or including too much information. Oftentimes students have to be prompted to include their results, so try to include that without being asked. Also, eliminate any examples that do not paint you in a positive light. However, keep in mind that some examples that have a negative result (such as "lost the game") can highlight your strengths in the face of adversity. (Handout, n.d.)

The STAR method is an acronym that stands for Situation, Task, Action, and Result. It is a structured approach commonly used in interviews or when answering behavioral questions to effectively communicate experiences and accomplishments. The STAR method provides a framework for organizing and presenting information in a clear and concise manner. By using the STAR method, you can provide a comprehensive and structured response that effectively showcases your abilities and experiences. This approach helps you communicate your skills and achievements in a clear and organized manner, making it easier for interviewers or others to understand and evaluate your capabilities.

The Technique of STAR Method

STAR Method is a technique commonly taught by professional recruiters, career counselors and job interview coaches to help candidates structure their answer to a behavioural/competency based.

a) Situation Provide for a specific situation to provide context to the answer

b) Task Describe in detail a task that you were responsible for and had to complete. Even if you worked on a team, it is important that you are clear on what your own responsibilities were.

c) Action What specific actions did you take to complete the task or solve a problem?

d) Result Describe the results and outcomes of your action. Did you achieve successful results? What was the final outcome?

The Power and Benefits of the STAR Methdod

a) Structure and Clarity: The STAR method provides a clear structure for organizing information and conveying experiences. By breaking down narratives into four distinct components - Situation, Task, Action, and Result -

individuals can present their stories in a logical and coherent manner. This structure ensures that information is presented in a way that is easy to follow and understand, enhancing communication effectiveness.

b) Behavioral Interview Success: The STAR method is particularly useful in behavioral interviews, where candidates are asked to provide specific examples of their past experiences and skills. By utilizing the STAR method, candidates can concisely and effectively respond to interview questions. It enables them to provide concrete and detailed responses by outlining the specific situation, the task or challenge they faced, the actions they took, and the results they achieved. This method allows interviewers to assess a candidate's skills, problem-solving abilities, and achievements more accurately.

c) Highlighting Accomplishments: The STAR method empowers individuals to highlight their accomplishments and demonstrate the value they bring to organizations. By clearly articulating the actions taken and the results achieved, individuals can showcase their skills, initiative, and impact. This method allows individuals to quantitatively or qualitatively express the outcomes of their efforts, providing evidence of their abilities and success.

d) Enhanced Self-awareness and Reflection: The STAR method encourages self-awareness and reflection, enabling individuals to identify and articulate their strengths, skills, and areas of growth. By systematically evaluating their experiences through the lens of the STAR framework, individuals gain a deeper understanding of their own capabilities, allowing for continuous personal and professional development. This method fosters self-reflection, enabling individuals to refine their skills, set goals, and make informed decisions.

e) Effective Communication in Various Settings: The benefits of the STAR method extend beyond interviews and professional settings. This structured framework enhances communication in various situations, such as presentations, performance evaluations, and team collaborations. By applying the STAR method, individuals can deliver concise, compelling, and impactful messages, ensuring that their ideas and experiences are effectively communicated and understood by others.

f) Continued Growth and Adaptability: The STAR method is a dynamic and adaptable framework that can be applied to various experiences and situations. Its versatility allows individuals to continually refine their communication skills and adapt the method to different contexts. Through ongoing practice and application, individuals can refine their storytelling abilities, effectively communicate their experiences, and confidently navigate diverse professional scenarios.

Findings and Discussion

To assist foreign students in overcoming these challenges, volunteering as a companion by applying the STAR (Situation, Challenge, Action, Reflection) method provides an effective framework. In this essay, we will explore the experience of volunteering as a co-host for foreign exchange students Muhammadiyah University of Parepare with the STAR method, and how this approach can provide support, overcome challenges, and encourage reflection for foreign students from Philippines University to achieve success.

1. Situation: Understanding the Context and Needs of Foreign Students First of all, as co-volunteers, it is important for us to understand the situation and life context of foreign students. This involves learning about their culture, the challenges they face, and their hopes and needs in this exchange. By understanding the situation in depth, we can design a suitable approach and provide relevant support.

2. The Challenge: Identifying and Overcoming Barriers Every international student faces unique challenges in adapting to a new environment. As partners, our job is to identify and overcome these challenges. For example, they may have difficulty communicating, navigating a different education system, or coping with homesickness for family and friends in their home country. By understanding these challenges, we can provide specific support and help foreign students find effective solutions.

3. Action: Providing Active Support and Assistance Having identified challenges, the next step is to take action to provide the necessary support and assistance. This involves various activities, such as assisting them in understanding local culture, accompanying them when they face academic difficulties, or facilitating their participation in social activities on campus. Through concrete actions, we help foreign students overcome challenges and help them feel more comfortable and integrated.

4. Reflection: Encouraging Personal Growth through Reflection The STAR method encourages structured reflection for foreign students. As co-volunteers, we can help them reflect on their experiences, evaluate their progress, and identify lessons learned from these exchanges. Through reflection, they can develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their culture, and the impact that foreign exchange students have on their personal growth.

As a volunteer guide for student exchange programs, you play a crucial role in supporting and guiding these students throughout their journey. This essay explores the significance of volunteering as a guide for student exchange programs, highlighting the benefits it brings in terms of cultural exchange, personal growth, and fostering global understanding.

1) Cultural Exchange and Understanding: Volunteering as a guide for student exchange programs provides a unique opportunity to foster cultural exchange and understanding. By welcoming students from different countries and backgrounds, you facilitate the sharing of traditions, customs, and perspectives. Through interactions, language practice, and exploration of local attractions, you bridge the gap between cultures, promoting empathy, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity.

2) Supporting Student Integration: As a guide, you serve as a crucial support system for exchange students, helping them navigate the challenges of living in a foreign country. From providing practical assistance, such as orientation and accommodation guidance, to offering emotional support, you play a vital role in ensuring a smooth transition. By helping students feel welcomed and integrated into the new environment, you contribute to their overall well-being and success during their exchange program.

3) Facilitating Language Acquisition: Language acquisition is a significant aspect of the student exchange experience. As a guide, you have the opportunity to facilitate language learning by engaging in conversations, providing language practice opportunities, and assisting with language barriers. By promoting language acquisition, you not only enhance students' communication skills but also foster cultural understanding and friendship.

4) Promoting Personal Growth: Volunteering as a guide for student exchange programs offers personal growth opportunities for both the guide and the students. For students, the exchange program is a transformative experience that promotes independence, adaptability, and resilience. As a guide, you witness their personal growth, witnessing their newfound confidence, intercultural competence, and expanded worldview. Additionally, guiding students through

their exchange program allows you to develop leadership skills, cross-cultural communication abilities, and a global mindset.

5) Building Lifelong Connections: Being a guide for student exchange programs creates opportunities to build lifelong connections. As you guide and support students throughout their exchange journey, you develop meaningful relationships based on shared experiences, trust, and mutual learning. These connections can extend beyond the duration of the program, creating a global network of friends and contacts.

6) Fostering Global Citizenship: Volunteering as a guide for student exchange programs contributes to fostering global citizenship. By promoting cultural understanding, facilitating meaningful interactions, and encouraging students to become responsible global citizens, you play a significant role in shaping a more inclusive and interconnected world. Your efforts contribute to building bridges of understanding and promoting peaceful coexistence among diverse cultures and societies.

Conclusion

The STAR method is a powerful framework for effective communication, interview success, and professional development. By providing a clear structure, enhancing self-awareness, and facilitating concise and impactful storytelling, the STAR method empowers individuals to effectively communicate their experiences, achievements, and value. As a versatile tool, it can be applied to various contexts, fostering continued growth and success. Embracing the STAR method equips individuals with the skills necessary to stand out, make an impression, and achieve their goals in today's competitive landscape.

Volunteering as a co-host on foreign exchange students from Philippines University using the STAR method provides an effective framework for providing support, overcoming challenges, and encouraging reflection. By understanding the situation, identifying challenges, taking appropriate action, and encouraging reflection, volunteer companions provide a holistic and purposeful approach to helping foreign students succeed during their exchange. Through this role, we not only provide practical support, but also help to enrich experiences and broaden understanding of culture and life in a new country for foreign students.

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